The Myrtle.

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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What the Birds Told.

"WHAT a dreary, sorrowful world is this!"
Said the owl from his hollow tree;
"Yet the lark is glad for the dazzling light,
And the robin can sing in glee.
Poor, foolish birds, they are merry now.
But the angry storms will beat
Through the leaves that shelter their shallow nests,
With the snow and the cutting sleet."

But higher and higher the blithe lark soared,
Till the earth lay far below;
The verdant valleys, the waving woods,
Smiled bright in the sunlight's glow.
"What a beautiful world has the Father made!"
She sang as she upward flew;
"The land, the water, and over them all
He has spread the warm sky's blue.

"Wherever on wayward wings we soar,
O'er ocean, o'er earth, through air,
The humblest, the weakest, by night and day,
He guards with a patient care.
He has given us each some song to sing,
And we utter them not in vain,
For he hears the hum of the lowliest bee,
And the sparrow's tremulous strain."

From her peaceful nest, on the swaying bough,
The robin sang soft and low;
"Oh! kind is the Father that made the leaves,
And bade the green grass grow.
He made the brooklets that we might drink,
The fruits that are rich and sweet.
He hangs on the boughs, when the flowers are gone,
That we may be glad and eat.

"We know that the summer that lingers now
Will vanish at his command;
That the flowers will die, and the leaves will fall,
When winter shall shroud the land.
But the frailest wing will his good hand guide
Through spaces of pathless air,
To climes where the date and the citron grow,
And summer dwells always there.

He loves the creatures that he has made,
And nothing is mean or small;
For tender compassion and boundless love
Are lavished alike on all.
So the world is bright if our hearts are bright,
And fair if our souls are fair;
For the gifts of his beauty may come to all,
With the bounty of sun and air."

For the Myrtle.

Only a Week.

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN John was awakened, it was by a loud cry from Alf, who had been aroused from sleep by the sharp points of pitchfork sticking into his foot. The scream frightened John. Springing to his feet, he cried out:

"Where am I? What has happened?"

"Sure enough, where are you? That's the question for me to ask, as well as for you," said the rough voice of a farmer, who had found the sleeping boys as he was crossing his field.

"*Who* are you? and what are you doing here? Those are my questions as well as the other."

Alf had come to his consciousness by this time. He remembered where and who he was, and a great dread came over him of their being detained, and exposed by this man, and thus prevented from accomplishing their purpose.

"Surely," he said, "you will not take us for bad boys, and punish us for lying down to sleep a little while beside your stack? We have done harm neither to you, nor your property."

The farmer had been looking at Alf closely, all the while he was speaking, and seemed inclined to believe in his honest face. His voice was softened when he spoke again.

"I have no wish to hurt you," he said. "It

was accident, my touching your foot with the fork. I hope you are not much hurt."

The boys were delighted with his softened mood. Alf replied:

"Thank you, sir, I think I was more frightened than hurt.

"Let us take a look at the foot," the farmer said kindly.

Alf pulled off his shoe and stocking, finding no harm, save a little red spot where one tine of the fork had touched.

"I am in luck you see," he said smiling. "If I had been a very bad boy, I don't think I would have got off as well as that."

The farmer laughed at this remark, and looking at the fork carefully, he said:

"It's pretty good steel, I think it would go through a good boy's foot, as well as a bad one's, if it had pressure enough on it. Nothing could hinder, if the foot and the fork came together hard enough.

"That may be. But something might prevent their coming together hard, if the foot belonged to a boy who didn't deserve such a misfortune."

"What something?"

"Why, God sends His angels to watch over us. Don't you think they are stronger than any steel, or any man's arm that presses it?"

"Who taught you that?"

"My mother taught me it first, or rather I should say, she told me that the Bible taught it."

"*How* does the Bible teach it? I never saw anything about pitchforks being prevented by special Providences, in my Bible."

"I didn't say that there was anything about pitchforks, but there is something about angels. Doesn't it say of Christ, "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone?"

"Yes, it does say that, in the account of the great temptation. But it *was of Christ* that these words were spoken. You must keep this fact in your mind. It was of Christ, and not of ordinary boys such as I find this morning under my stack, that God gave his angels charge."

"No, it is not of Christ alone that this watch-care of the angels is narrated in the Bible. In another place in Matthew, it talks about them as if each little child had guardian angels who were watching always over it."

"What do you mean?" said the farmer. "I don't remember any such place in my Bible."

"Well, there is such a place in every Bible."

"Repeat the passage, and I will see if I remember ever reading it."

"I don't know as I can repeat it, but I know there is such a passage there."

"I have my Bible with me, and can soon find it," said John, drawing the book from his pocket. "Do you know which chapter of Matthew it is in, Alf?"

"No. I am not entirely sure, but I think it is in the seventeenth or eighteenth. I remember that it is near the account of the Transfiguration. Either just before that account, or just after it, you will be sure to find it."

"And the account of the Transfiguration is, where?"

"In the seventeenth chapter."

John ran his eye hastily down the seventeenth chapter, and said:

"No. There is nothing about little children and angels in the seventeenth."

"Try the eighteenth," said Alf, "you will be sure to find it there."

John was already trying it, and a moment later he cried out:

"Oh yes, here it is. The tenth verse says, 'Take heed that ye despise no t one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.'"

"That's it," said Alf, "and so you see that I was right."

"Well I declare, I never noticed that before. Then you think there were guardian angels watching you, when you were lying there asleep under my stack?"

"I have not a doubt of it."

"Well, well! it is a new idea to me. But I shall never lay heavy hands again upon a little child, without thinking of it."

"It seems right, doesn't it, that God *should* set watchers over the little ones of the earth, there are so many dangers about them on every side."

"I don't see why grown people don't need watchers as well as children," said the farmer.

"I should think they did, and I see no reason why they do not have them as well as children. The Bible does not speak of them in that place, but mother said when she read that to me, about children's angels, that she knew no reason to think that these guardian watchers were ever removed from us while we remain upon the earth."

"I should think they were not taken away.

For surely our dangers are not lessened as we grow to manhood."

"Of this we may be sure," said Alf, "whatever is *best* for us, God will surely give us."

"Why do you feel so sure of that?"

"Because he is a God of Love, and loving us, he must always seek to do us good."

"But isn't He a God of *Justice*, as well as of Love. And does not the Bible say that he is angry with the wicked every day?"

"Yes, he is a God of Justice, but mark you how that word is used. It is a loving justice, and when he is angry with sinners, it is only that He may turn them away from their sins, and bring them back to Him. He does not stay angry with them."

"How do you know that?"

"Does it not say so in the Bible?"

"Does it say so?"

"It does, indeed. I remember that passage very well. 'The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger forever.' It seems to me that it ought to make us all good, when we think how good God is, and how much he wishes us to be like Him."

Well, really my boy, you have preached quite a sermon. But I must not stand here any longer, or my night's work will never get done."

"Surely you are not talking of doing night work, at this time of the day?"

"What time of the day do you take it to be?"

"I don't know just what time it is. But I should think not far from the morning."

"Look, and see where the sun is."

Alf turned his eyes toward the West, and there, sure enough, the sun was near setting.

"Well, I am astonished," said he. "Where can this day have gone to?"

"I think you must have lost it under the stack," said the farmer, laughing.

"At any rate it is gone, and we shall never see it again," Alf replied.

"No, it is not all gone yet. There is enough of it left for us to get a good supper in. So come right along with me to the house, and we will see what we can find."

"Thank you," said Alf. "We are quite agreed to that, for in our long sleep we went past dinner time, and I feel as if supper would taste good."

The boys were both very glad to accept this invitation, for their long fasting had left them faint and hungry.

"Pay Your Debts."

Bobby was playing with his toys, when his father came in, and sat down by him, and said, "Come, Bobby, come! now pay your debts." The little fellow climbed up on his father's knees, put his arms around his neck, laid his soft cheek against his father's rough beard, and began kissing him with all his might.

"Is that the way little Bobby pays his debts?"

"Yes;" said his father, "all he can do is to love his father; and, see! he loves me just as hard as he can."

His father clothes him, feeds him, cares for him, watches him by night and by day, works hard that Bobby and his mother may have a pleasant, happy home; and how can Bobby pay father for all his kindness and care?

The little boy pays his debts with *love*. That is a beautiful way. How good it is in God to give children this kind of money to pay their debts with!

But remember that love is something more than kisses, and caresses, and hugging, and saying, "I love you, papa." It is more substantial than these. True love speaks by *actions* as well as by words. This, too, is the only way to pay our dear Heavenly Father — by *love*. Dear Heavenly Father, give me, give all the dear children, more and more love to pay our debts with.

Little Sower.

The Lord Made Them All.

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens,
Each little bird that sings,
He made their glowing colors,
He made their tiny wings.

The purple-headed mountain,
The river running by,
The morning, and the sunset
That lighteth up the sky;

The tall trees in the greenwood,
The pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden,
He made them every one.

He gave us eyes to see them,
And lips that we might tell
How great is God Almighty,
Who hath made all things well.

THE most beautiful hand is the hand that gives.

Kissing the Sunbeam.

A DARLING little maiden
Was playing on the floor,
When suddenly a sunbeam
Came through the open door;
And striking on the carpet
It made a little dot;
The little maiden saw it,
And crept up to the spot.

Her little face was beaming
With a world of sweet delight,
As if an angel's presence
Was in the sunbeam's light.
And with her tiny finger
As in a fairy dream
She touched the spot of sunshine
And followed up the beam.

She looked up to her mother
To share her sudden bliss,
Then stooped and gave the sunbeam
A pure, sweet, childish kiss.
O Lord our Heavenly Father,
Forever in thy sight,
May she who loves thy sunshine,
Dwell in its perfect light.

In all the days of trial
That wait her dawning youth,
Send thou the light to guide her
The sunbeams of Thy truth.
And may her heart be ever
To thee an open door,
Through which the light of heaven
Streams in upon life's floor.

A LITTLE boy, seeing a drunken man prostrate before the door of a groggery, opened the door, and, putting in his head, said to the proprietor: "See here, sir; your sign has fallen down!"

"Too LOW he builds, who builds beneath the skies."

For the Myrtle.

Susan's Lesson.

"Mother," said little Susan Green, as she entered the pleasant sitting-room, one very warm Saturday afternoon. "I don't like studying at all; it always makes my head ache just to get my Sunday School lesson. I've studied all the week and had no time to look at it, and I must go to church to-morrow morning, and now I thing I might rest. I think if I am only good it doesn't matter if I am not learned and wise."

"Well," said her mother, "I do not approve of long lessons, but I wish you to learn a little every day of something that will be useful to you in after years, and acquire habits of study, and then thought, and study, instead of giving you the headache, will become the greatest pleasure of your life. You may be good and amiable, but if you are ignorant, stupid, and thoughtless, you will always be getting into trouble."

Just then a cry was heard in the shed, the door opened, and little Jack appeared shaking his hands, crying "O-o-o-o" and the big tears rolling down his cheeks.

"What's the matter?" said Susan and her mother at once.

Oh! I've burned my hands," said Jack.

"Why, how could you burn you when there's no fire in the stove?" asked his mother.

"I took some of Joe's powder, and turned it on the floor, and set it on fire."

"Well," said his mother, "you have done wrong to meddle with powder that does not belong to you, and this is your punishment."

But his mother pitied him, and went and took some flour and water, and made a thick paste and spread it over his fingers and then wrapped a cloth around them, and in a few minutes Jack was singing as merrily as ever.

"Why does paste stop the smarting, mother?" asked Susan.

"Why, fire or burning, is only the union of any substance with the oxygen of the air, and if we shut out the air the burning ceases; but of course the burned place feels badly because it is so unnatural to have the pores closed. But we

ought to be very thankful to our Heavenly Father for the pain and smart of burns and cuts, for if it were not for the pain, I'm sure Jack wouldn't have a finger on his hand by the time he was a man, they would all be whittled or burned off."

When the children were gathered around the evening lamp, Susan repeated the passage which she had learned in the New Testament, which was this. "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." *A. S. T.*

FORGIVE thyself nothing and others much.

For the Myrtle.

Two Little Hands.

THERE are many little hands in this great world, bonnie wee hands that belong to dear little people, and that look so very charming, that one cannot help taking them up and covering them with kisses. Of two such little hands I am about to write.

These little hands are very soft and plump, with rows of saucy little dimples under the small fingers, and they get as brown as a nut in

the summer days, so that their little owner is called by his friends "Little Brown Hands."

Sometimes these little brown hands get into mischief, it is true, but they do a great many good things, and they are such dear, restless, little hands, always busy the whole day long, that indeed I do not see how we should ever get along without them.

All the violets love these little brown hands, and watch for them in the early spring days, to come to visit their home down by the brook in the meadow, opening their blue eyes wider and wider each day, as they think how glad the little brown hands will be to find them growing there in the bright green grass.

The wild roses bend their heads low, when the little brown hands come to pluck them, the buttercups smile, and the sweet clover blooms blush with joy when they see the little brown hands coming, indeed, *all* the flowers love to see these little hands, and even the tall waving grass kisses the tips of the wee fingers as they pass by, and there is nothing good in this world, I think, that can help loving such little hands.

Santa Claus brought these little brown hands a pretty pair of bright red mittens to keep them warm in the cold winter days, and they were loved so much that the little hands wanted to wear them all the time, indoors and out.

But one morning, while taking a walk, their owner saw two other hands, a little smaller than his own perhaps, and these other hands were all purple with the cold. In an instant off came the pretty red mittens from the little brown hands, and with a "Here poor baby," they were in the other pair of hands, and the "poor baby" went on his way rejoicing.

These little hands are very restless stormy days, and, not knowing what else to do, cover the window panes with pictures of father and mother. Very wonderful pictures they are, a big round ball with a line on each side, one stretched toward the east, and the other toward the west, then there are two more lines close together which go southward as far as the length of the window panes will allow, then stop very suddenly. Very good pictures for two such little hands and who can tell what they *may* do some day.

But not being permitted to make any more pictures on the windows the little hands are supplied with paper and pencil to write a letter to sister, who is far away.

"Dear sister," writes the little brown hand, "I wish you would come home," then stops a long while. Suddenly a bright thought comes, and the little hand writes, "Some new little chickens have come," then another long pause and it writes again. "Dear sister, I wish you would come home." And now that so very many words are written, and it has taken the little hands *so* long, they can only write, "Good-by, Your Brother," and the letter is finished, and the little brown hands are so tired that it is time they were in bed. Then these little hands are clasped together, while a sweet voice says, "Now I lay me down to sleep." Soon they lie very still on the white pillow, and I think the good angels must come to kiss these little brown hands in the long dark night, and I am sure that the Saviour, when he was here on earth, must have kissed just such little hands as these.

Maggie C. Schouler.

Legend of the Passion Flower.

It is said that certain Jews, bewailing in Jerusalem the death of Christ, saw, for the first time, this flower, by some said to have sprung wherever drops of his blood had fallen, and, with the scene of his wondrous passion and death still fresh in their memory, gave to this beautiful blossom a symbolic meaning indicative of his sufferings and the manner of his death.

The anthers are supposed to represent the three nails used at the crucifixion. The rays represent the glory of our Lord. The purple fringe, sometimes found with red spots upon it, is a type of the crown of thorns. The petals, ten in number, are the representatives of those apostles who were faithful to their Heavenly Master. The three sepals, forming the calyx, are emblematical of the Trinity.

This poetical conception has caused the passion flower to be held in esteem, almost amounting to veneration, in Catholic countries; and the blossom is found entwined, in many cases, with emblazoned inscriptions and borders of old manuscripts of sacred writings.

A CHILD three years old, who had seen parched corn, but not the trees in bloom, came in one day in the early summer with her eys as round as buttons, and said, "Oh, mamma, pop-corn all over the pear trees!"

Independence Hall.

Many of the young readers of the MYRTLE, have never seen Independence Hall in Philadelphia. But we hope that most of them may one day. It is a place of great interest to every American. We made a call upon it, not our first one, however, during our recent visit to the United States Convention. Many others, also, who attended the Convention, visited the Hall.

It stands on Chestnut Street. It is a brick edifice, with a row of healthy looking trees before it, and with one of the finest of shaded yards in the rear of it. In was in this square, on the steps of the back door of Independence Hall, that the Declaration of Independence was first read to the people, after it had been signed by the members of Congress in the Hall.

We enter the Hall at the front door, and turn in the entry way to the right. Here is where the American Congress first met; where Mr. Jefferson with the other Committee chosen for the purpose, brought in the Declaration of American Independence, where it was first talked about, and finally signed on the 4th of July, 1776, and then made public through the land.

Directly before us and opposite the door of entrance, is a statue of Washington. He has a lively and commanding look. There is more of life and fire in the face, than there is in that of the statue in the State House in Boston. This statue in the Hall is of wood. It was wrought by William Rush, a citizen of Philadelphia. He was in Washington's army in the early part of the Revolutionary War, and was honored with high favor from the Commander-in-chief during and after the war. His profession, on giving up a soldier's life, was that of a sculptor in wood, and he attained to the highest eminence in this art. Directly before this statue, is a piece of the stone step on which the reader of the Dcelaration of Independence stood, at the outside door of the Hall, when the document was first proclaimed to the people.

On the right, up some distance from the floor, and surrounded by a railing, is another object of great interest. It is the old Bell of Independence, now cracked, and taken down, and placed here to be seen by the generations to come. It was brought from England in 1752, but having met with some accident in being rung, it lost its tones, and was re-cast. This was done under the direction of Isaac Norris, Esq., then speaker of the Colonial Assembly. He had cast upon it this motto from Leviticus 25: 10, "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." It rung the first note of liberty to the people after the Declaration was signed. A sacred old bell, that!

Let us look about us more. The Hall is hung with portraits of the good and true, of the heroic and faithful in other days. Here is Wililam Penn, the good Quaker proprietor of Pennsylvania, and founder of Philadelphia. Here is Franklin. How he first entered Philadelphia, most of my young readers know. He was buried in this city. And then, how many of the men of the Revolution are here; Washington, a painting by Peale, with that of Lady Washington, Gen. Green, Gen. Charles Lee, Baron Steuben, Gen. St. Clair, Gen. Lafayette, Baron De Kalb, Gens. Knox, Dearborn, Warren, Sumpter. And here are Adams, Jefferson, Hancock, Morris, Hopkinson, Witherspoon, Rush, Charles Carroll, Alexander Hamilton, wise, strong, and patriotic men, all of them. But we cannot note all of the paintings.

There is a remarkable chair here, made in 1838. Among the materials used in its construction, are, a portion of a mahogany beam from a house built in 1496 near the present city of St. Domingo, for the use of Christopher Columbus. This house was the first built in America by European hands. The chair contains, also, fragments of the Treaty Elm, of William Penn's Cottage, of the frigates *Constitution* and *Pennsylvania*, and of the old walnut trees formerly in front of the house.

It is a great room, a consecrated place, a temple of Freedom, into which the people may come from every portion of our land, and find strength and blessing, as their thoughts, while here, shall be true thoughts for the great rights of mankind, "lif , liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

We go into the observatory or belfry of the Hall, and enjoy a magnificent view of the city. It is bright noon, and the rich hazy blue and golden sky, with the orange edged fleecy clouds above, and the far-reaching city on every hand below, with its intensely red brick and white framed blocks and squares, filled in every where with deepest green foliage, makes a picture which the painters are not able to present us.

May the old Hall stand for ages, for the eyes of many generations to behold, to make glad the hearts of millions yet unborn, to remind our nation and the world of the blessings of liberty, and that this liberty is to be preserved only by that righteousness which God requires of all nations — of all men. *J. G. A.*

Why Do We Have Sabbath Schools?

This is a very important question. Do you know how important it is, young readers?

What should we do if we had no religious people in our land, no churches, no Sabbaths, no prayers? There is a great deal of wickedness now that we have these blessings; but what should we do without them? We should have a state of society much worse than it now is. Surely we should.

And now what shall we do if our youth are not growing up to be Christians? For the time is coming when all who are now religious and who support our Christian institutions, will be gone from the earth. Then who shall take their places? Those who will do as they have done, or those who care little or nothing for religious institutions, for the Church, the Bible, the Ministry, the Sabbath School? Think of this, young friends.

The Sabbath School is one place where our youth should be instructed how to be Christians. This is the true intent of the Sabbath School. It is of more consequence than anything else connected with the school. A school may have a large library. and fine concerts and exhibitions, and grand excursions and festivals; but all these cannot make a Christian school, that is, a school where Christian teachers are helping to make Christians of their scholars. Sunday Schools ought to do this work.

Dying Words of a Son.

"Mother, I have never in my life disobeyed you." These were the last words of one of our Presidents, uttered to his venerable mother, as she stood by his dying bed. How many sons in more humble life than he, can say this? "Honor thy father and thy mother; this is the first commandment *with promise*." but there is no promise to sons and daughters who neglect their parents, disregard their wishes, and spurn their authority.

——There are 8,766 hours in the year. We can use of these at least 5,000. What an opportunity, and how much that is good and useful should we seek to put into these hours!

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON LIX.

THE TRUE WAY TO GREATNESS.

"He took upon him the form of a servant; wherefore God hath highly exalted him."

SCRIPTURE, — Matt. xviii. 1–6. Mark ix. 33 37. Luke ix. 46–48.

Question. — Respecting what question did the disciples dispute?

Answer. — Matt. xviii. 1.

NOTE. The disciples, as well as the Jews, believed the Messiah was to de an earthly king,—a king of the Jewish nation,—and some of them were anxious for the highest offices in the kingdom.

Q. — What did Jesus do?

A. — Matt. xviii. 2.

Q. — What did he say to them as he placed the child in their midst?

A. — Matt. xviii. 3.

Q. — If they would become like little children in humility, what would be their reward?

A. — Matt. xviii. 4.

Q. — Whom would they receive upon receiving a little child in Christ's name?

A. — Matt. xviii. 5.

Q. — What would be better than to offend one little child?

A. — Matt. xviii. 6.

NOTE. To offend means to injure by neglect or any wrong treatment. The millstones were about two feet in diameter, and were sometimes used in executing a person condemned to be drowned.

Christ does not rebuke his disciples for desiring to be great. Rather, he encourages their desire, and shows them the true and only way to become great. They had mistaken the way to greatness, and he shows them the true way, the way by which he will reach it and have a name at which every knee shall bow.

Hidden Seed

Enigma No. 1.

My first is in boy, but not in man;
My second is in cannot and also in can;
My third is in fat, but not in lean;
My fourth is in generous, but not in mean;
My fifth is in bad, but not in good;
My sixth is in bonnet, but not in hood;
My seventh is in horn, but not in bell;
My whole is more beautiful than I can tell. *I. T. S,*

Enigma No. 2.

A queen who dared to disobey
Her king's command:
A Jewish maid of low estate
A queen does stand:
A leper cleansed: the man to whom
His leprosy was sent:
The prophet from before whose sight
Snow white she went:
An early keeper of the sheep:
One who did take
The treasures from Jerusalem —
Forsaken make
The temple and the city too:
A Persian King,
Who built a temple and restored
Each precious thing:
Where went King Saul to hear the words
A witch might say:
My whole belongeth to the Lord,
He will repay. *H. H. D.*

Answers.

OCT. 28. Sin; Advocate; Blessing; Angels; Christianity; Humility; Truth; Hypocrisy; Aceldema; Neighbor; Intercession. Sabachthani.

David.

Reuben; Isaiah; Vashti; Euroclydon; Rainbow; Ostrich; Furnace; Lucifer; Ithamar; Fig; Evengel. River of Life.

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